

CCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed

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CCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed is an exhibition of French photographer Frederic Chaubin's images of late Eastern bloc architecture, and was on view at the Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York City until June 16.

Chaubin's images, taken over a five year period, include a wide array of structures not often represented in the history of Soviet architecture, such as a Crimean union health center, an Estonian cross-country skiing resort, and secluded summer homes of party leaders in Lithuania and Armenia. The photographs are beautifully composed, and draw attention to the monumental and often witty combination of landscape and architecture, as well as discrepancies between architecture constructed for the public good and vast private residences available only to a slim minority.

Writing of the architects (acknowledged in the exhibit when possible), the website remarks, "Operating in a cultural context hermetically sealed from the influence of their Western counterparts, they drew inspiration from sources ranging from expressionism, science fiction, early European modernism and the Russian Suprematist legacy to produce an idiosyncratic, flamboyant and often imaginative architectural ménage. Unexpected in their contexts, these monumental buildings stand in stark contrast to the stereotypical understanding of late Soviet architecture in which monotonously repetitive urban landscapes were punctuated by vapid exercises in architectural propaganda."

<http://www.storefrontnews.org/current.php>